

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

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DRAFTED BY S/PRS:JHTRATTNER
APPROVED BY S/PRS:JHTRATTNER
S/S-O: SGOLDSMITH
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FOR HODDING CARTER FROM S/PRS - TRATTNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING AUGUST 11, 1977

NO. 32

1. CANAL AGREEMENT: I TURNED ASIDE QUESTIONS ON SUCH MATTERS AS CONTENTS OF AGREEMENT OR ESTIMATES OF TREATY'S CHANCES ON THE HILL, NOTING THAT OUR NEGOTIATORS WERE EN-ROUTE TO WASHINGTON AND WOULD SEE PRESIDENT TODAY, AND THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO FORECAST WHAT EVENTS MIGHT SUBSEQUENTLY TAKE PLACE TO MEET NEEDS OF PRESS. I EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE, HOWEVER, THAT AMPLE PROVISION WOULD BE MADE FOR THIS.

2. I DENIED REPORT THAT EILTS HAD RECEIVED LETTER DELIVERED BY PLO OFFICIAL.

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3. IAN SMITH'S REMARK THAT U.S. AND BRITISH SILENCE OVER RECENT BOMBINGS IN RHODESIA AND MURDER OF MISSIONARIES THERE INDICATES WE CONDONE SUCH ACTS: I SAID WE OBVIOUSLY DO NOT CONDONE IT, THAT ALL OF OUR EFFORTS TOWARD SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA ARE DIRECTED AT REACHING A SITUATION WHERE THIS KIND OF THING NEED NOT OCCUR; WE DON'T CONDONE VIOLENCE AND WE DON'T CONDONE THIS PARTICULAR VIOLENCE.

FACT THAT IT OCCURRED SIMPLY UNDERLINES NEED TO REACH RHODESIA SETTLEMENT AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME.

4. REPORTS THAT CASTRO TOLD SEN. CHURCH HE WILLING TO DISCUSS AMERICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD BY CUBA: I SAID WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THESE REPORTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO LEARNING RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS. MATTER OF PRISONERS HAS BEEN OF CONCERN TO ADMINISTRATION (YOU WILL ALSO HAVE SEEN LATER STORIES THAT CHURCH AND CASTRO ANNOUNCED TODAY CUBA WILL ALLOW ABOUT 80 U.S. CITIZENS AND FAMILIES -- BUT APPARENTLY NO PRISONERS -- TO LEAVE CUBA).

5. URUGUAYAN ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO HOLD ELECTIONS IN 1981: I SAID WE ARE ENCOURAGED AT THIS PUBLIC CONFIRMATION OF URUGUAY'S INTENTION, ANNOUNCED LAST YEAR, TO HOLD ELECTIONS IN 1981; THAT WE ARE HOPEFUL THIS WILL LEAD TO CREATION OF ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH OTHER PROBLEMS -- ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS -- CAN BE APPROACHED IN A POSITIVE MANNER; AND THAT, ALTHOUGH THE PROCESS LEADING TO ELECTIONS IS ONLY IN BEGINNING STAGE, WE LOOK FORWARD TO DAY WHEN URUGUAY RETURNS TO ITS DEMOCRATIC TRADITION OF POLITICAL AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM.

6. STATEMENT ISSUED AT ERDA AT CONCLUSION OF THREE DAYS OF MEETINGS OF ENERGY COMMITTEE OF U.S.-IRAN JOINT COMMISSION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAS READ INTO RECORD. IN ESSENCE, STATEMENT SAID BROAD REVIEW OF VARIETY OF ENERGY MATTERS WAS CONDUCTED, NUMEROUS POSSIBILITIES IDENTIFIED FOR COOPERATION THIS FIELD, AND AGREEMENT REACHED TO DEVELOP VARIOUS SPECIFIC COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS. USEFUL EXCHANGE WAS HELD ON PROPOSED BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND IT WAS AGREED TO CONTINUE THESE DISCUSSIONS WHILE AWAITING ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION ON NUCLEAR EXPORTS NOW BEFORE CONGRESS.

7. I TOOK QUESTION WHETHER A CABINET-LEVEL MEETING IS SCHEDULED AUGUST 16 ON CONTINUED U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN ILO. CHRISTOPHER

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